...
"THIS PLACE..."

"...IS A PALACE
SO MAGNIFICENT,

ONE WOULD HARDLY BELIEVE IT WAS UNDERWATER."
"IT DOES NOT SMELL LIKE WATER..."
"...AND I CAN BREATHE."

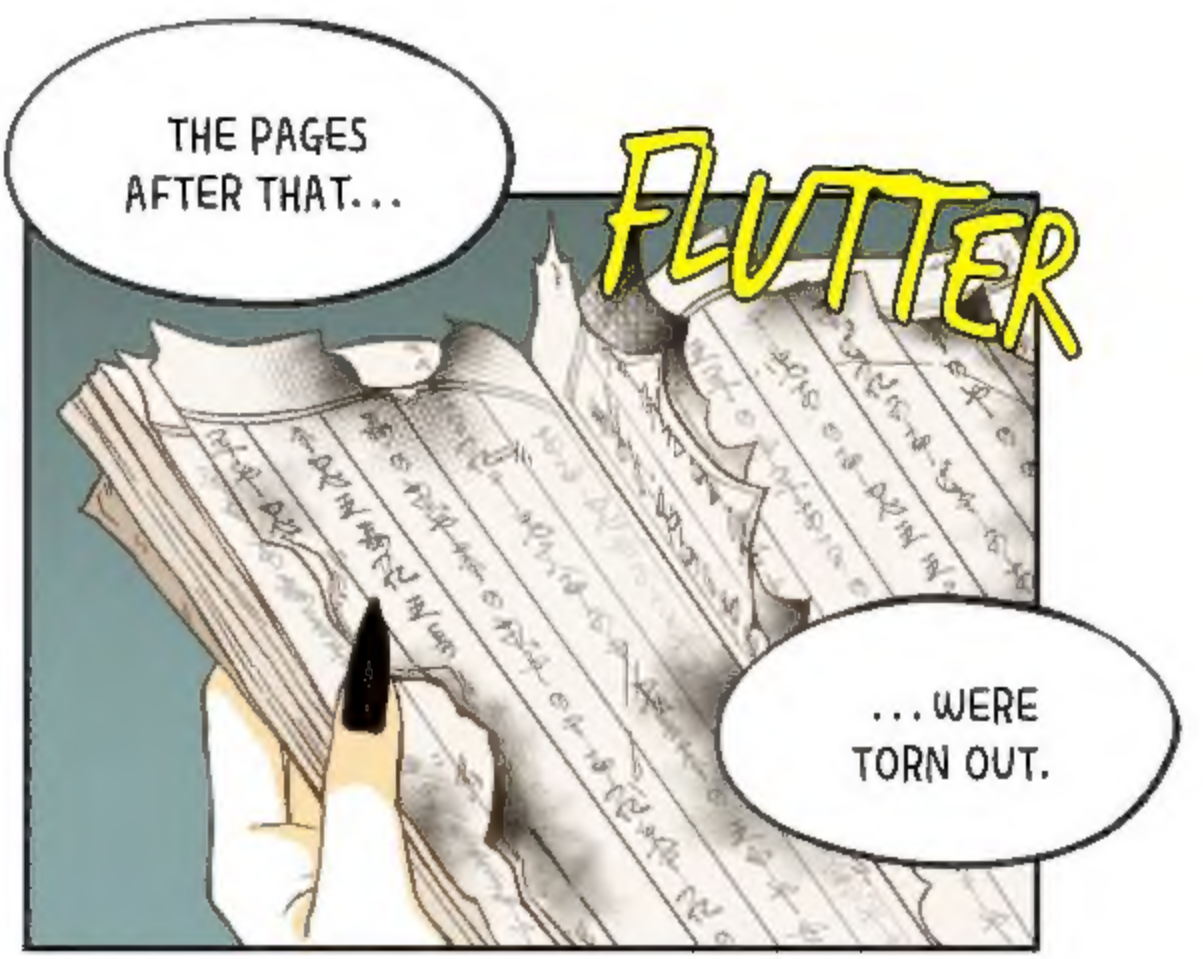
"I WAS SURE I'D DROWN, LIKE MY BROTHER."

"I'D ALWAYS BEEN TOLD THAT THE ELDEST SONS IN OUR FAMILY WERE CURSED TO DROWN AND HAUNT THE WATERS."

"I THOUGHT THIS PLACE WAS THE AFTERLIFE..."
"...BUT I WAS GIVEN SUCH A HAPPY REUNION WITH HIM."
"IS THIS..."
"...A DREAM, OR REALITY?"

How to become a Dragon

- EPISODE 145 -


THE PAGES AFTER THAT...
FLUTTER
...WERE TORN OUT.

THAT ENTRY,

IT SEEMS LIKE HE WROTE ABOUT THE THINGS THAT HAPPENED AT THE DRAGON PALACE.

"I ASKED MY BROTHER IF HE WANTED TO GO OUTSIDE OF THE WATER WITH ME."

FLIP

BROTHER...?

"I WENT HUNTING WITH MY BROTHER..."

FLIP

FLIP

"THERE WAS

A SMALL FEAST FOR MY BROTHER'S BIRTHDAY..."

WAIT,

SO IF THE PERSON HE REUNITED WITH IN THE WATER WAS HIS BROTHER WHO DROWNED BEFORE HIM...

...DOES THAT MEAN THAT THERE WERE TWO HUMANS IN THE NAKDONG RIVER DRAGON PALACE?

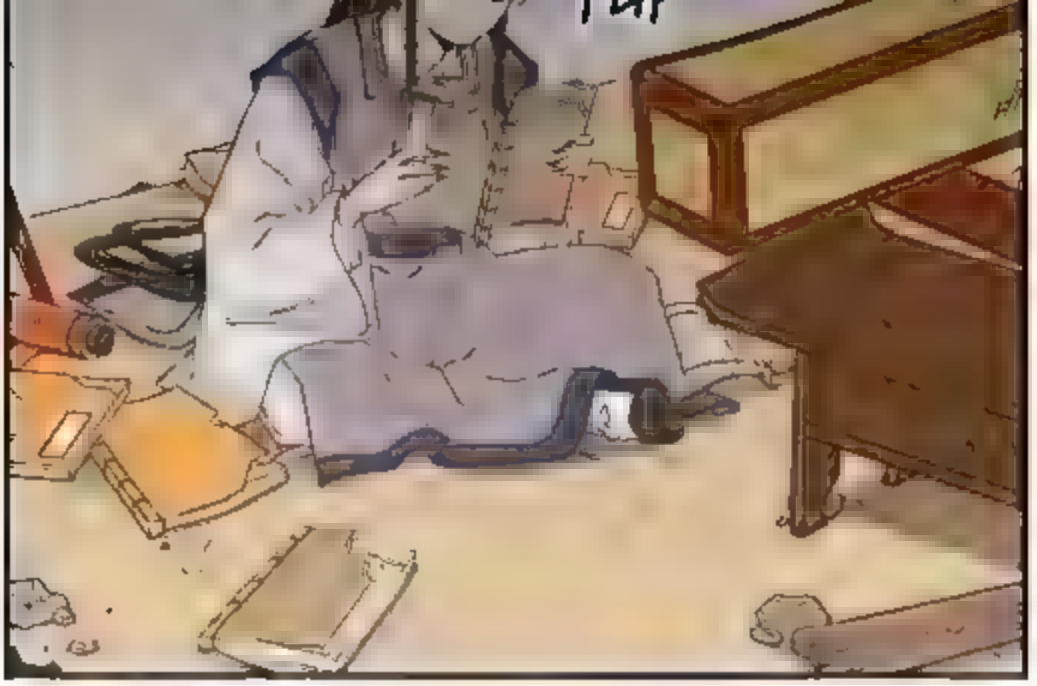
Y-YOU'RE RIGHT...
BUBBLE
BUBBLE
DID THE NAKDONG RIVER DRAGON SAVE BOTH BROTHERS AFTER THEY FELL INTO THE WATER?
THE DRAGON PALACE ISN'T A SHELTER!

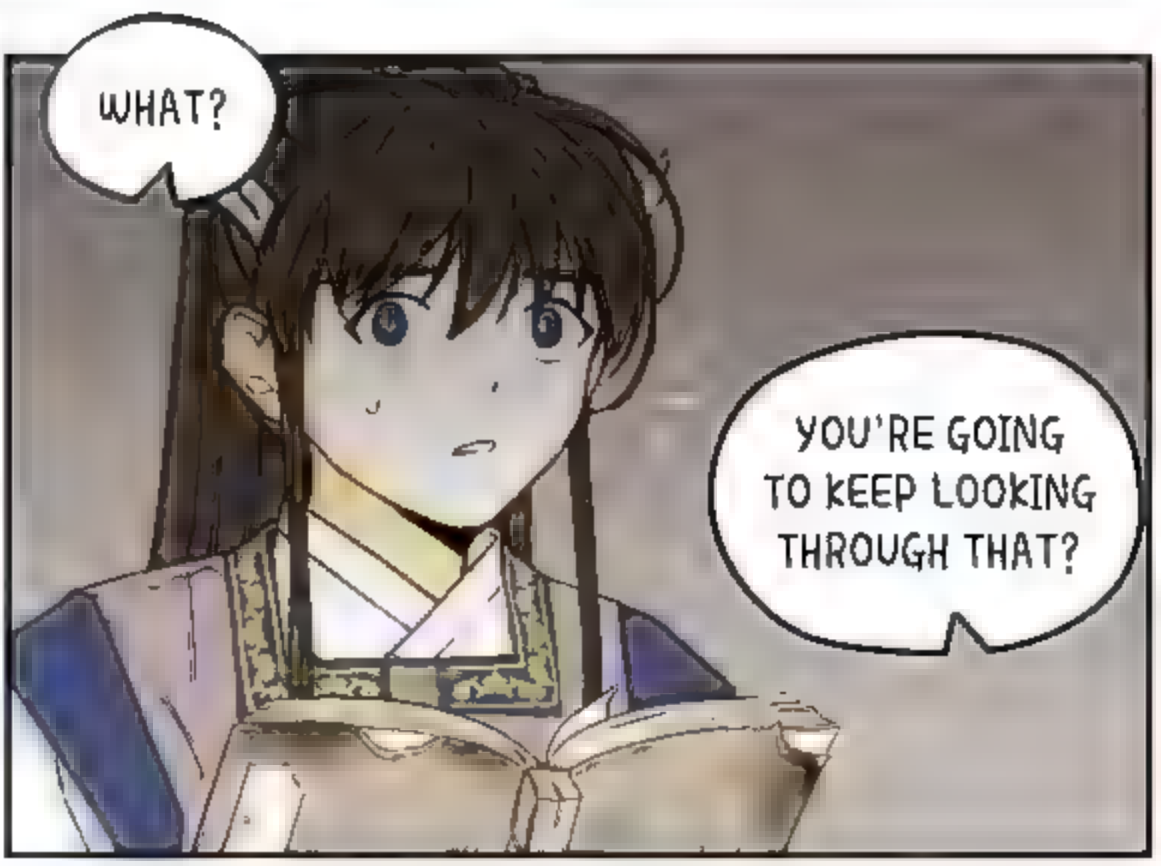
WHO CARES HOW MANY HUMANS THERE WERE IN THE PALACE?

IT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT HE BETRAYED THE DRAGON WHO HELPED HIM AND RAN AWAY.
QUIT WASTING YOUR TIME AND COME OUT.
THERE'S NO WAY HE WAS DIM-WITTED ENOUGH TO HIDE THE ORB IN HIS OWN ROOM.
LET'S GO, HUON!

STEP
STEP

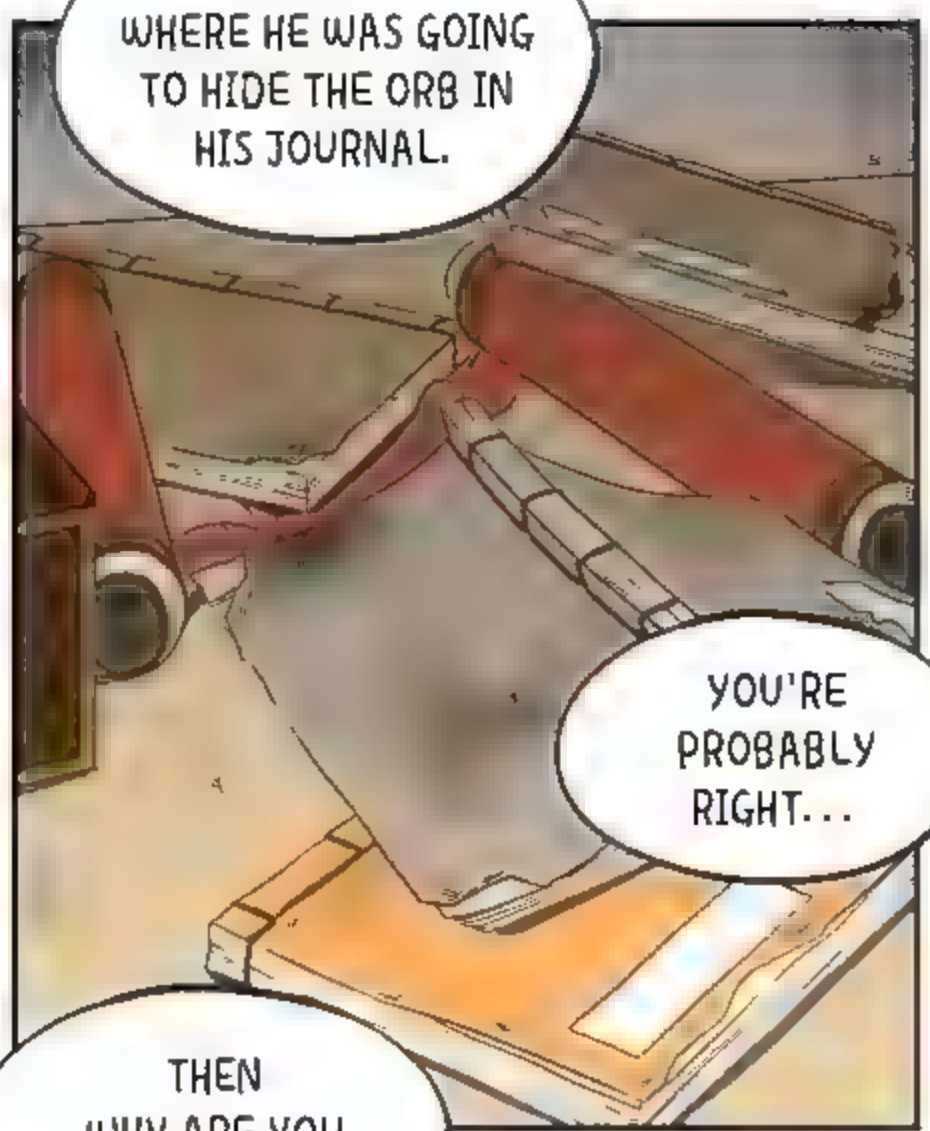
FLIP




WHAT?
YOU'RE GOING TO KEEP LOOKING THROUGH THAT?

OH...
YEAH...
I JUST WANT TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF HUMAN HE WAS...
IN ORDER TO CATCH SOMEONE FOR EMBEZZLEMENT, YOU HAVE TO SEIZE THEIR ACCOUNT,
TRACK DOWN THEIR OTHER ACCOUNTS,
AND LOOK THROUGH THEIR COMPUTER, PHONE, OR TABLET...
TRUE.

HUH...?



STILL, I DOUBT HE WROTE DOWN PLANS FOR HIS CRIMES,

OR EVEN WHERE HE WAS GOING TO HIDE THE ORB IN HIS JOURNAL.

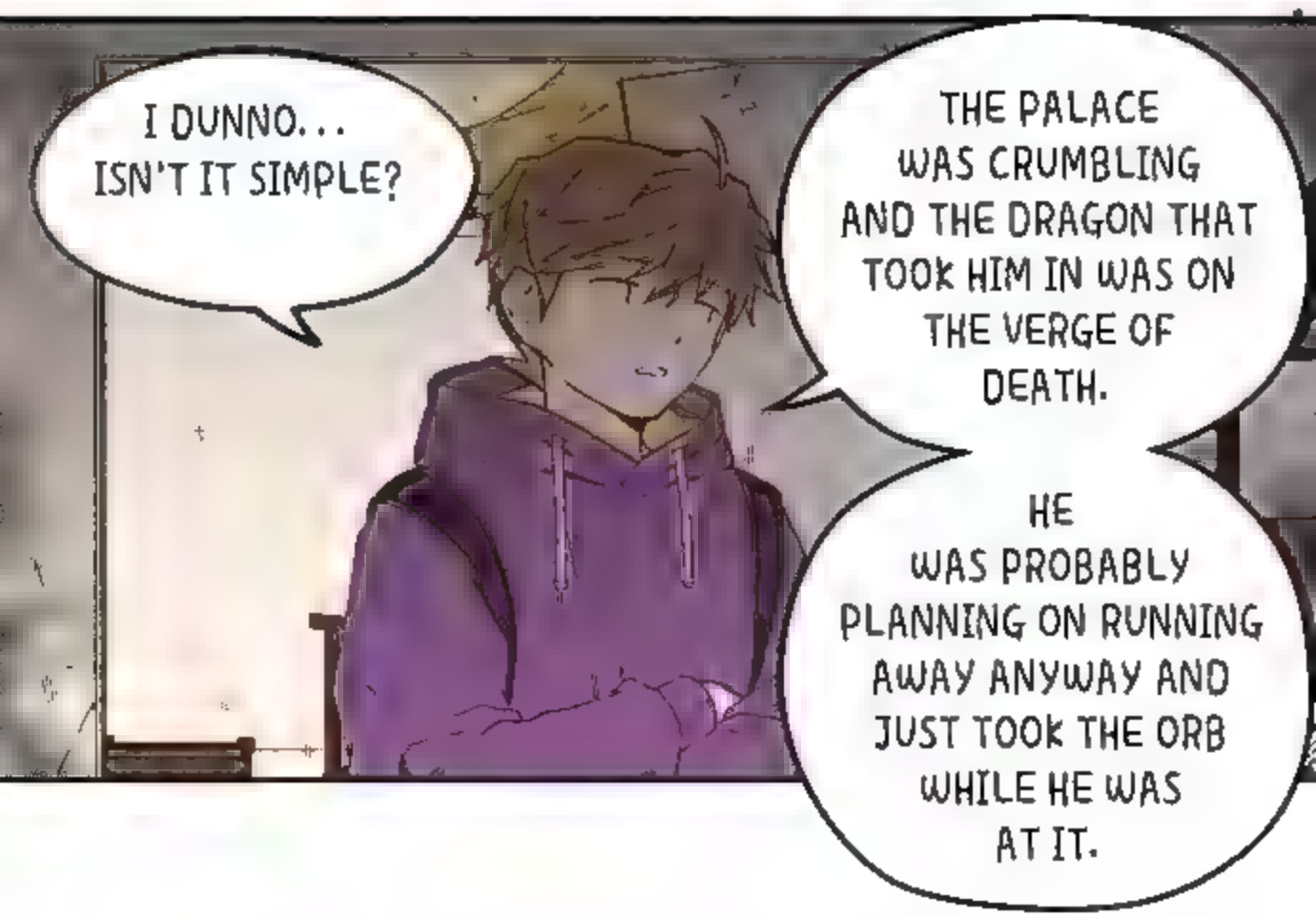
YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT...

THEN WHY ARE YOU READING IT?

IF YOU READ THE JOURNALS,

IT SEEMS LIKE HE WAS REUNITED WITH HIS BROTHER AND LED A HAPPY LIFE IN THE PALACE...

SO WHY...?


I DUNNO...
ISN'T IT SIMPLE?
THE PALACE WAS CRUMBLING AND THE DRAGON THAT TOOK HIM IN WAS ON THE VERGE OF DEATH.
HE WAS PROBABLY PLANNING ON RUNNING AWAY ANYWAY AND JUST TOOK THE ORB WHILE HE WAS AT IT.

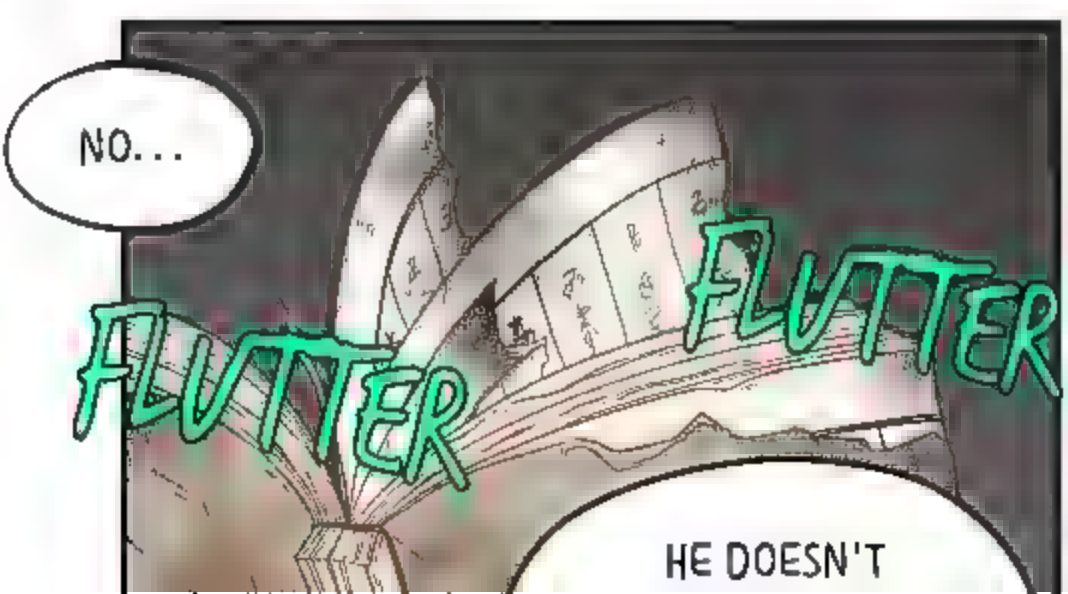
ONLY BY HIS SELFISH DESIRE...

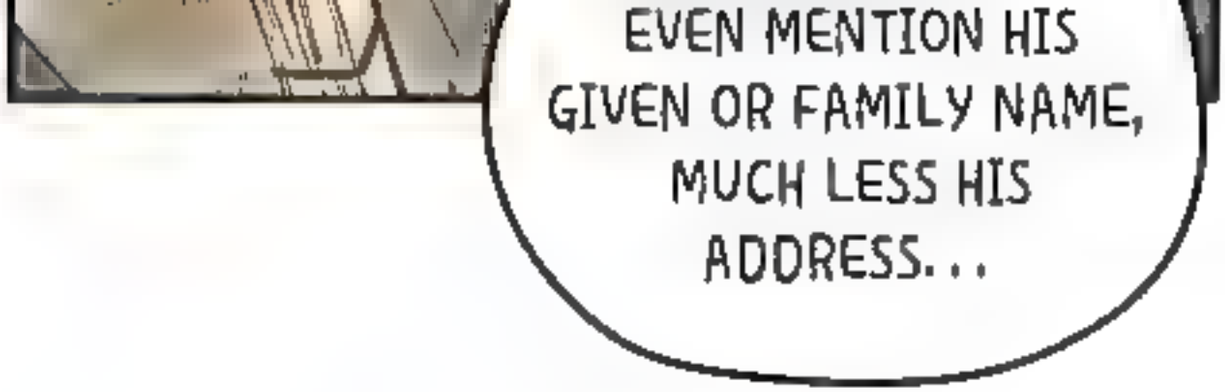
...WOULD THE DRAGON HAVE TAKEN IN SUCH AN EVIL HUMAN?

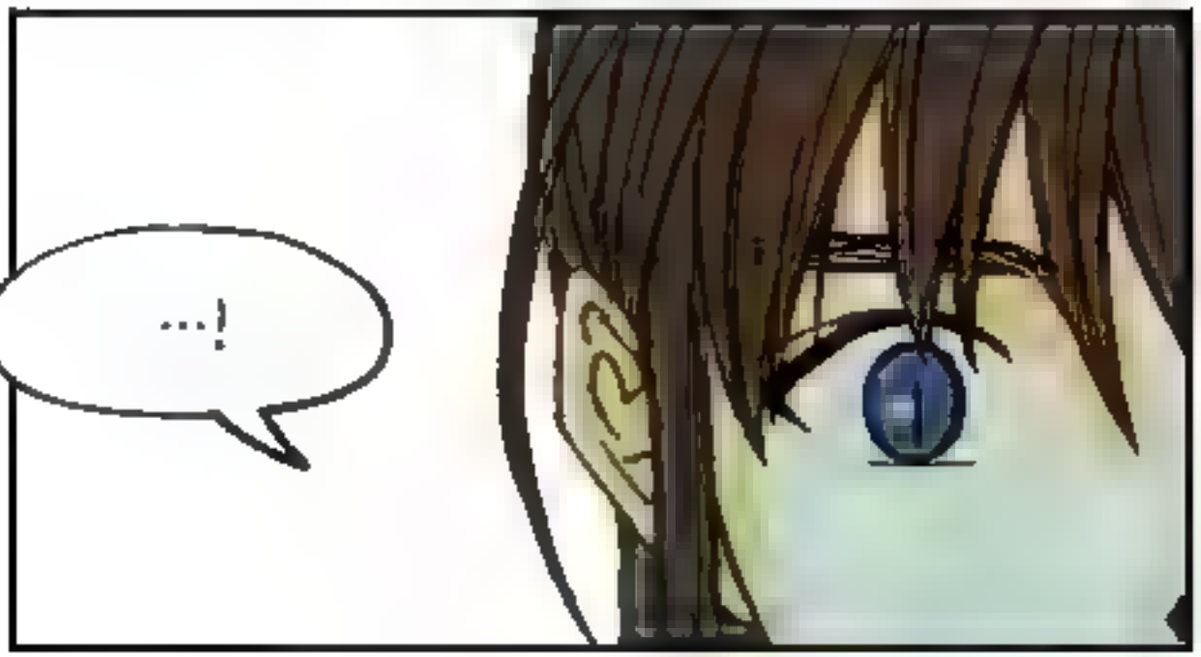
...
EVEN IF HE WAS A GOOD HUMAN...
...PEOPLE CAN MAKE FOOLISH DECISIONS IN DESPERATE SITUATIONS.
YOU KNOW THAT NOW, TOO.

UH...

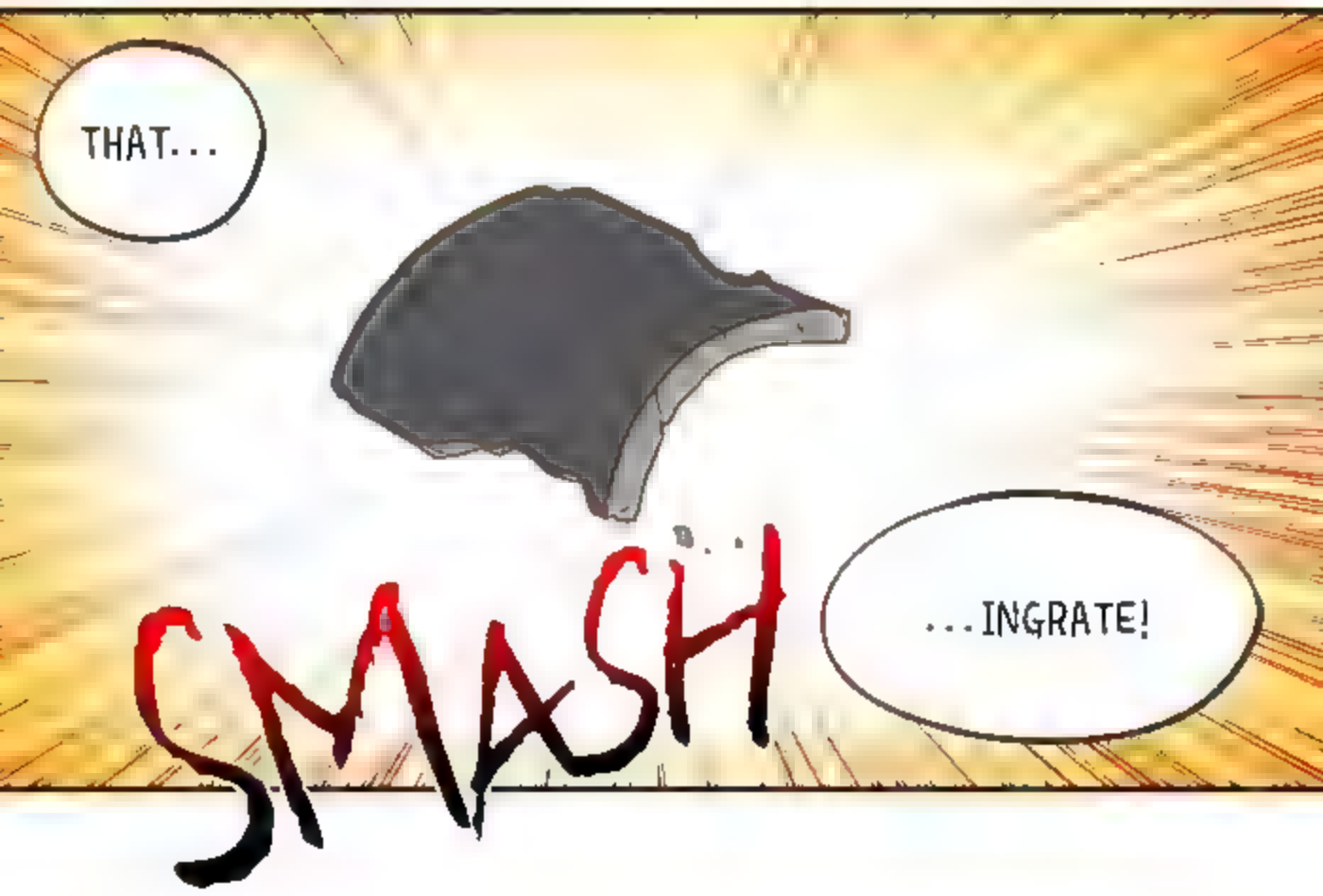
IS THERE ANY PERSONAL INFORMATION IN THOSE JOURNALS?
...
LIKE HIS HOME ADDRESS, OR...


NO...
FLUTTER
FLUTTER
HE DOESN'T


EVEN MENTION HIS
GIVEN OR FAMILY NAME,
MUCH LESS HIS
ADDRESS...


...!

THE NAKDONG RIVER DRAGON TOOK HIM IN...
...AND YET THERE'S NO MENTION OF HIM, EITHER.


THAT...
SMASH
...INGRATE!

ALL HUMANS ARE LIKE THAT, I GUESS.
...

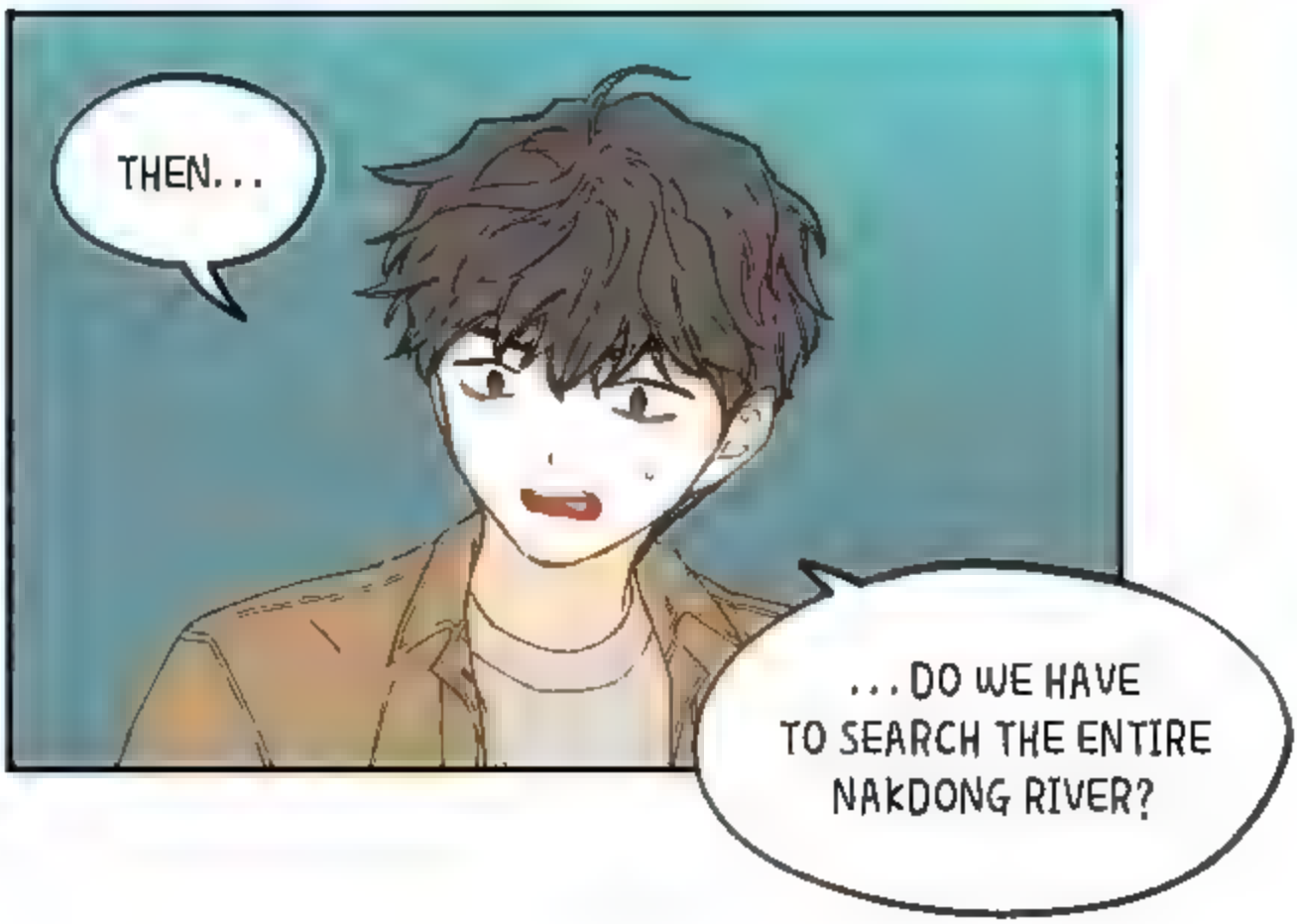
THEY DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO OTHERS. ALL THEY CARE ABOUT IS THEMSELVES AND WHAT THEY CAN GET!

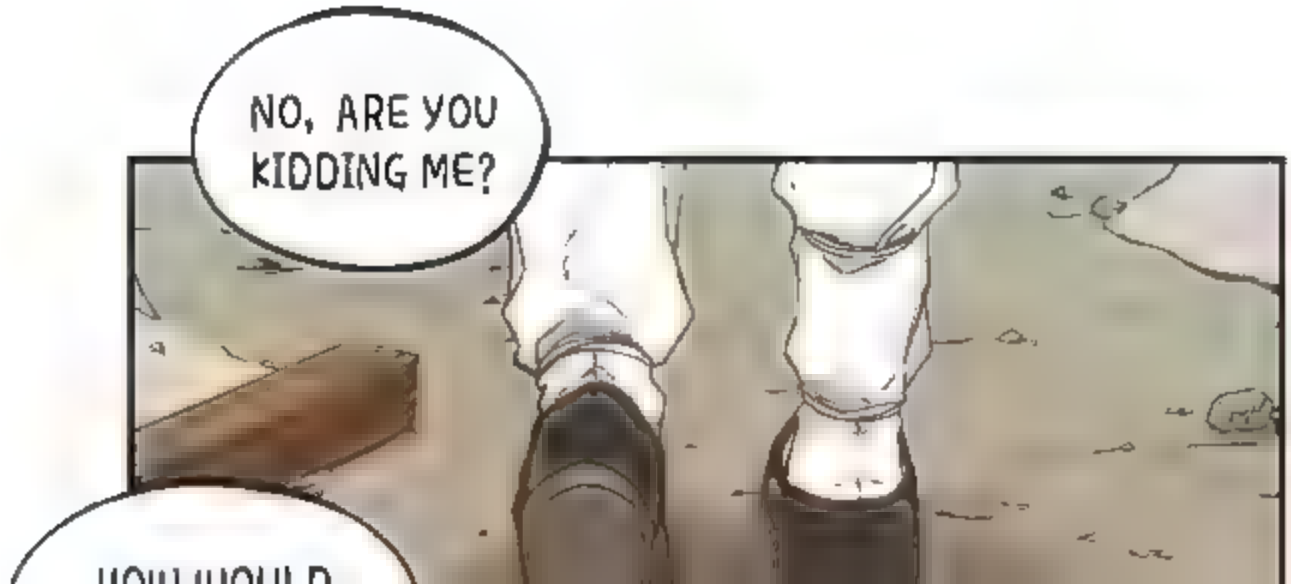
WHERE ARE WE GOING?
HUH?!
AREN'T WE AT THE EDGE OF THE PALACE?
ARE WE GOING OUTSIDE?

DIDN'T YOU HEAR WHAT YOUNG SAID?
HE SAID HE DOESN'T THINK THE ORB IS IN THE PALACE.

YOU WERE SAYING THAT WAS A TERRIBLE IDEA JUST A MINUTE AGO...
I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, AND I THINK HE'S RIGHT.

EVEN IF A WHOLE BUNCH OF CREATURES IN THE NAKDONG RIVER DIED,
IT'S NOT LIKE THEY WENT COMPLETELY EXTINCT.
IF THE ORB WAS INSIDE THE PALACE, DON'T YOU THINK SOMEONE WOULD HAVE FOUND IT BY NOW?
EVEN THE DRAGON KING HERSELF COULDN'T FIND IT.


THEN...
...DO WE HAVE TO SEARCH THE ENTIRE NAKDONG RIVER?


NO, ARE YOU KIDDING ME?

HOW WOULD WE DO THAT?
WE'RE SPECIFICALLY GOING TO SEARCH...
...NEAR THE GATES...
...OF THE DRAGON PALACE.

NEAR THE GATES? WHY?

IF THAT HUMAN SPENT HIS NATURAL LIFESPAN WITHIN THE PALACE,

HE WOULD HAVE DIED AS SOON AS HE LEFT THE PALACE.

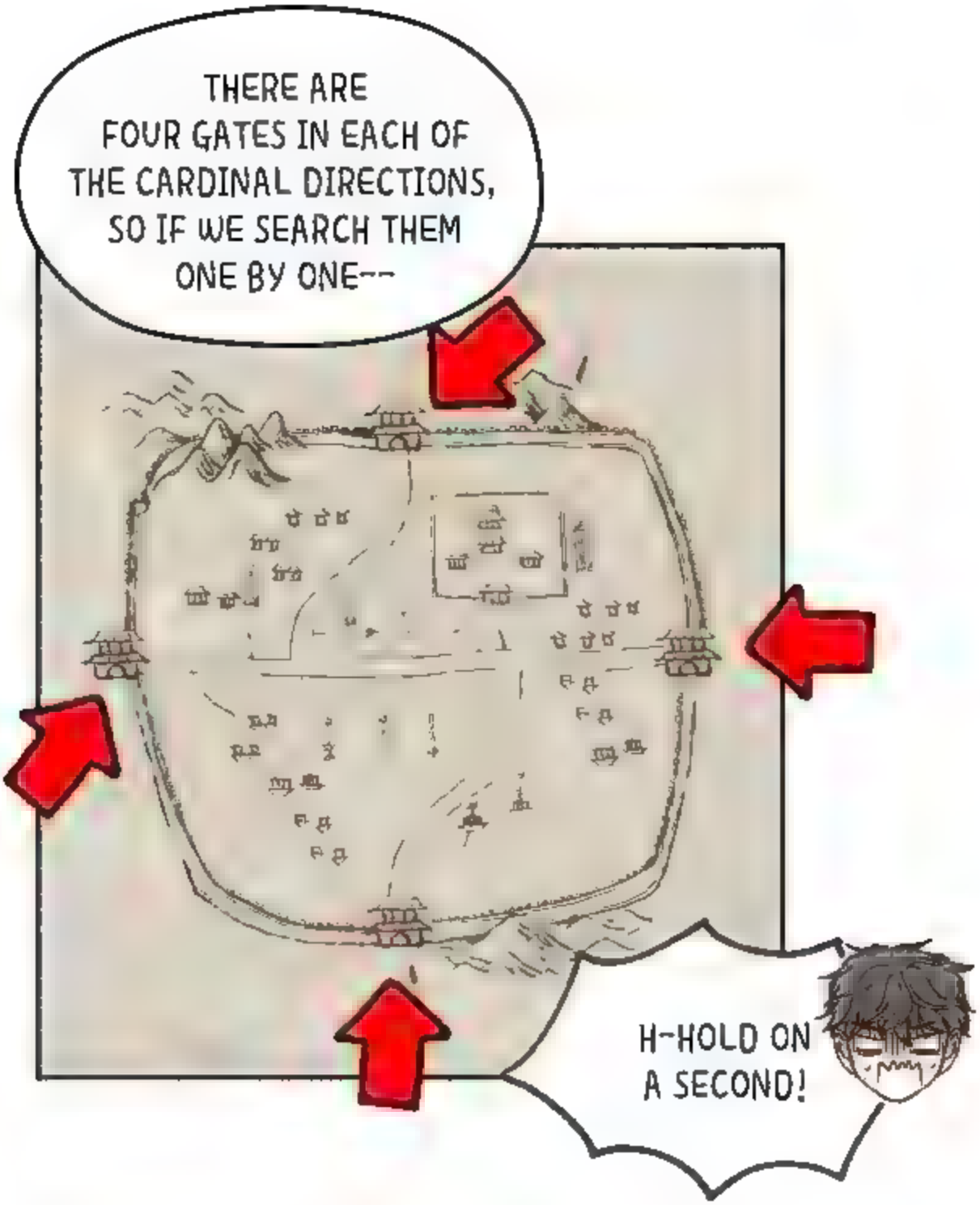
EVEN IF THAT FOOL DIDN'T KNOW THIS AND WAS SO BLINDED BY GREED...

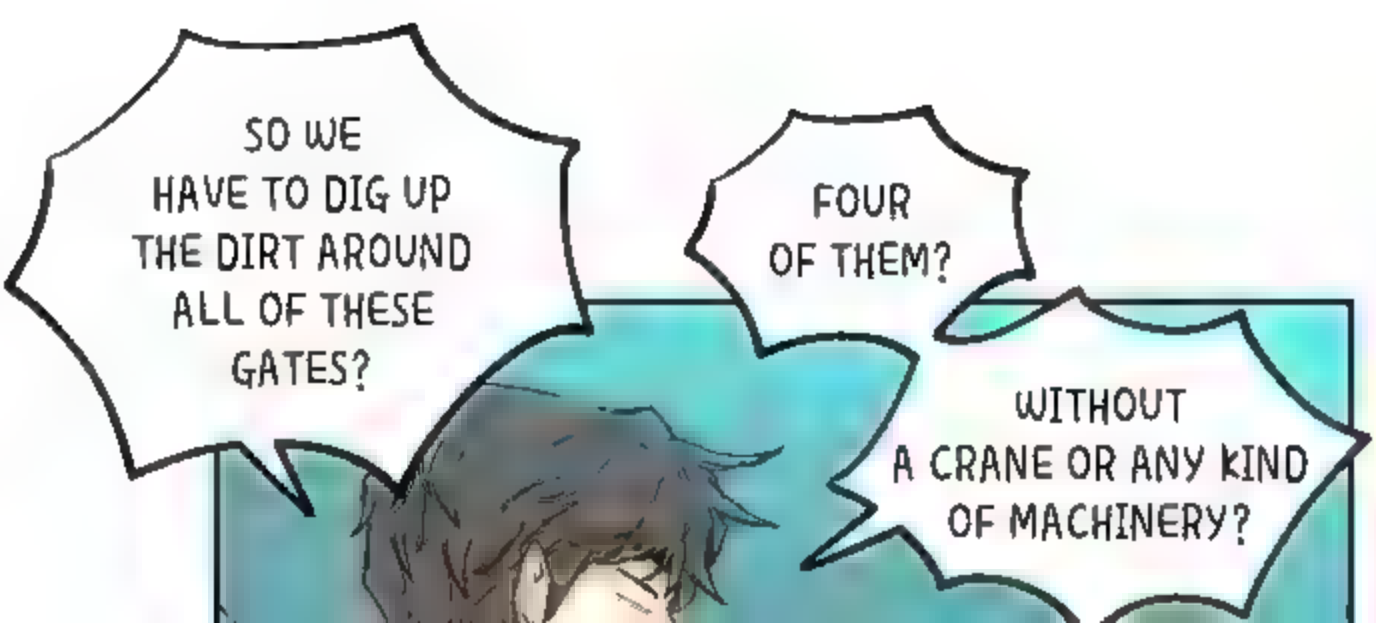
...THAT HE STOLE THE ORB AND RAN AWAY...
...AS SOON AS HE TOOK A STEP...
...OUT OF THE PALACE...

...HE WOULD HAVE STARTED DEMATERIALIZING.

THAT MEANS THAT THE ORB WAS PROBABLY DROPPED NEAR THE PALACE GATES...
WHOOOOSH
...AND IS NOW COVERED BY A DEEP

LAYER OF DIRT.


THERE ARE FOUR GATES IN EACH OF THE CARDINAL DIRECTIONS, SO IF WE SEARCH THEM ONE BY ONE--
H-HOLD ON A SECOND!


SO WE HAVE TO DIG UP THE DIRT AROUND ALL OF THESE GATES?
FOUR OF THEM?
WITHOUT A CRANE OR ANY KIND OF MACHINERY?

MACHINERY?

DO YOU KNOW...
...WHAT MY SPECIALTY IS?
CRACK
CRACK

HUH?
SPECIALTY...?

WHAT
IS IT--?
FWSHHHH

FWOOOOSH
WHOA!!

MWAHAHAHA!
STOP IT!
CRASH
AHAHAHAHA!!